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C O N F I D E N T I A L YEREVAN 001813

SIPDIS

DEPT FOR EUR/CACEN

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TAGS: PREL PM PGOV AM AJ

SUBJECT: ARMENIA'S TEST FOR NATO AND PFP: WILL THEY BE ALLOWED TO PARTICIPATE IN CBE04?

REF: A) YEREVAN 684 B) UNDERWOOD-SIDEREAS 8/13/2004

E-MAIL

Classified By: CDA A.F. Godfrey for reasons 1.5 (b) and (d).

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A TEST FOR PFP  
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¶1. (C) GOAM senior policy makers are looking to the upcoming Cooperation Best Effort 2004 (CBE04) Partnership for Peace (PfP) mid-September exercise in Azerbaijan as a test case for whether NATO, PfP members and the U.S. genuinely want to work with Armenia. Until the five Armenian military officers who have requested visas at the Azerbaijani Embassy in Tbilisi receive their visas and are allowed to take part in the exercise, GOAM senior officials from the President to the Foreign Minister will continue to present this as a clear-cut test of NATO's will.

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NO CBE04 WITHOUT THE ARMENIANS?  
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¶2. (C) GOAM officials point to the fact that they allowed Turkey to participate in CBE03 exercises in Armenia (and invited Azerbaijan as well) and note that they expect the U.S. and its NATO allies to pressure Azerbaijan into allowing Armenian participation in CBE04.

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CLOSER ARMENIAN MILITARY COOPERATION  
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¶3. (C) In recent months, Armenia has shown important signs that it is considering closer engagement on defense issues; the GOAM is developing its Individual Partnership Action Plan (IPAP) and agreed to a Defense Assessment on August 5. Armenian officials lead us to believe that if CBE04 goes forward without Armenian participation we can expect serious disenchantment with both NATO and PfP.  
GODFREY